



Harford Transit LINK Policy Manual

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

System Description.....	1
• Overview, Legal Authority, Policy Statement Regarding Equal Opportunity	
Safety and Security.....	1 - 6
• Operations, Maintenance and Technology, Scheduling Dispatching and Communications, Personnel, Training, Facilities	
Fare Policy Statement.....	6
Changes in Fares and Routes.....	6
Public Outreach and Involvement.....	6 - 8
Lift Maintenance.....	8
Passenger's Belongings.....	8
Policy on Children.....	8
Requirement for Securing Wheelchair and Related Devices.....	8
Service Animals.....	9
Passenger Assistance/Self Sufficiency/Personal Hygiene.....	9
Passenger Behavior.....	9
Fare Structure.....	10
• Regular Fares, Special Fare Provisions	
Route Services.....	10 - 11
• Scheduled Bus Stops, Bus Announcement Procedures, Individuals with Disabilities	
Flag Stops.....	11
Paratransit Services.....	11 - 13
• Personal Care Attendants and Companions, No Show Policy, Pick-up Location(s), Curb to Curb Service	
Senior Center Support Services.....	13
Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).....	13 - 16
Appendix 1.1 Cover Letter, Disability Reduced Fare Packet	
Appendix 1.2 Application Reduced Fare Due to Disability	
Appendix 2.1 Cover Letter ADA Application	
Appendix 2.2 ADA Application Packet	
• ADA Eligibility Letter	
• Curb-to-Curb Eligibility Letter	

System Description

Overview

Harford County Transit operates public bus routes and paratransit/demand response Origin-to-Destination (curb-to-curb) transportation services. Paratransit services include Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) service provided as an equivalent service to bus route service, in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

Harford Transit LINK provides service Monday - Friday except for County holidays. The bus routes and ADA paratransit operate in the central and southern parts of the county, linking the communities of Joppatowne, Edgewood, Abingdon, Belcamp, Perryman, Aberdeen, Havre de Grace, Churchville, and Bel Air. In addition to the ADA paratransit service, limited demand response services for persons over 60 and persons with disabilities are provided on a countywide basis. Harford Transit LINK purchases services from cab companies to supplement the paratransit/demand response it provides with its own vehicles.

Legal Authority

Harford Transit LINK provides scheduled bus route services for the public in accordance with federal, State of Maryland and Harford County laws, regulations and policies. Regulatory authority includes regulations of the Federal Transit Administration and the Maryland Transit Administration. Harford Transit LINK provides paratransit or demand response Origin-to-Destination (curb-to-curb) services for persons over the age of 60 and persons under 60 with disabilities in accordance with federal and State laws and regulations, including applicable sections of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Policy Statement Regarding Equal Opportunity

It is the policy of Harford County Government to maintain a strong commitment to Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Opportunities for all. There will be no discrimination in any area because of Race, Color, Religion, Sex, National Origin, Age or Non-Disqualifying Disability. (See Harford County, Maryland's 2014 – 2017 EEO Manual for more detailed information).

General Requirements (Apply to all transit services)

Safety and Security

If confronted with a safety or security event or emergency, Harford Transit LINK makes every effort to ensure that personnel will respond effectively and use good judgment based on our established rules and procedures.

This level of proficiency requires that we continually strive to improve while following established operational procedures for all transit personnel to identify and report safety

or security hazards, threats and vulnerabilities associated with Harford Transit LINK's operations, and develop controls to eliminate or minimize identified hazards, threats and vulnerabilities.

- Coordinate with the Emergency Operations Center (EOC), local law enforcement, fire department and other public safety agencies to manage response to any incident that occurs on a transit vehicle or affects transit operations, and
- Identify a process for integrating transit resources and capabilities into the community response effort to support emergency management.

Operations

Harford Transit LINK has programs, policies, procedures, protocols or infrastructure that address operational safety.

- Each bus driver is equipped with a two-way radio to enable them to speak with dispatch for various events as well as communicate directly with law enforcement in emergency situations.
- The organization complies with ADA safety requirements; this includes vehicle accessibility, onboard lift/ramp, securement equipment and passenger assistance.
- Safety concerns are taken into consideration when a particular vehicle type from the fleet is assigned to service delivery.
- Routes, schedules, and Demand Response pick-up times are evaluated for safe operation of service within the parameters of on-time performance.
- Bus stops or pick-up and drop-off locations are periodically evaluated for safety.
- There is enough time between check-in and scheduled pullout time for drivers to complete their pre-trip inspection.
- Drivers are required to wear a seat belt at all times when operating a transit vehicle.
- Drivers are prohibited from using a cell phone while operating a vehicle in accordance with State law.
- Transit buses are clearly and properly identified with numbers on the buses that are easily visible from ground level.
- There is a formal process for documenting, tracking and responding to safety-related complaints from passengers or other members of the public.
- The organization has a passenger assistance policy defining the parameters of demand response service such as Origin-to-Destination (curb-to-curb) and the specific type of assistance drivers can provide to passengers.
- There are protocols that outline expected driver response to on-vehicle emergencies.
- The organization equips transit revenue vehicles with basic safety equipment including fire extinguisher, biohazard kit, first aid kit, reflective triangles, web cutter, flashlight and a reflective vest for drivers.
- Web cutters are located on the vehicle within reach of a driver from the driver seat.
- When transit vehicles are equipped with passenger seat belts, passengers are encouraged or required to wear seat belts.

Maintenance and Technology

Harford Transit LINK has programs, policies, procedures, protocols or infrastructure that address safety in relationship to maintenance and technology.

- The organization has a vehicle maintenance plan that includes formal procedures for preventive and corrective maintenance.

- All vehicle maintenance required by manufactures warranty provisions is being performed by the contractor for the County's fleet.
- The maintenance management function ensures that vehicles are regularly and systematically inspected and maintained in accordance with the vehicle maintenance plan.
- The organization has a tracking system to schedule vehicle inspections and maintenance intervals and records date or mileages when services are due.
- The organization's commitment to the safety of its passengers is reflected in the way it keeps transit vehicles clean and clear of safety hazards.
- There are open lines of communication between the in-house or outsourced maintenance function and drivers that results in the sharing of expertise to maintain the operational safety of the fleet.
- Drivers perform vehicle pre-trip/post-trip inspections and document these inspections on a formal checklist.
- The organization has a system to identify defects that require corrective maintenance and forms to document the defects and the maintenance conducted to correct the defects.
- Vehicle defects that drivers note during pre-trip/post-trip inspections are repaired in a timely manner and management validates the repairs.
- Wheelchair lifts, ramps, securement devices and other accessibility features of transit vehicles are tested daily and the organization ensures there are no recurring patterns of lift failure or related problems.
- All vehicle preventive maintenance activities are documented utilizing a formal checklist.
- Daily pre-trip/post-trip vehicle inspections forms are kept on file for the period required by the States Department of Transportation (MDOT)/Maryland Transit Administration (MTA).
- All preventive maintenance documentation, including work orders, purchase orders, and/or invoices, are kept on file according the procedures outlined by MDOT/MTA.
- All corrective maintenance documentation, including work orders, purchase orders, and/or invoices are kept on file for the life of a vehicle plus three years.
- Separate and distinct records are maintained in individual vehicle files detailing all maintenance activities on each vehicle.
- If the organization and/or its contractors uses hazardous materials and stores them on site, it has a hazardous material program that addresses container labeling and includes material safety data sheets (MSDS), a formal inventory of the materials, an approved plan for disposal, a plan for reacting to an emergency involving hazmat release and employee training on handling hazardous materials.

Scheduling, Dispatching and Communications

Harford Transit LINK has programs, policies, procedures, protocols or infrastructure that address dispatching and communication.

- The organization ensures, as best it can, that there is reliable communication coverage between vehicles and base.
- There is always a dispatcher and/or supervisor available to respond to drivers needs during all hours that service is being delivered.
- Dispatchers and supervisors have formal safety protocols immediately available to them to guide their response to transit emergencies.

- There is a strong policy governing driver personal cell phone use to lower driver distraction safety risks.

Personnel

Harford Transit LINK has programs, policies, procedures, protocols or infrastructure that address the safety of personnel.

- There is a formal personnel policy document addressing all personnel actions relative to transit employees and records are kept that prove employees have signed for receipt of various policies and training.
- The organization utilizes the Harford County Safety Manual and various Driver training materials, safety bulletins etc. that address all safety related standard and emergency operational activities. Employees sign for various training and materials received.
- The policy manual governs passenger behavior and encompasses personal oxygen tanks, service animals, levels of driver assistance, restricted type and amount of items passengers can bring onboard, restricted passenger activities on vehicles and the right of the organization to refuse service to a passenger based on behavior or other safety-related issues.
- The organization has a formal and written workplace violence policy and program that is in the Harford County Policy manual.
- The organization is compliant with all Drug and Alcohol Program requirements as mandated by the Federal Transit Administration and the MDOT, and the MDOT/MTA validates this program.
- There are formal job descriptions for drivers and other safety-sensitive personnel.
- The organization uses a formal on-line job application form and verifies all information provided by applicants of safety-sensitive positions.
- Driver license checks are conducted prior to selecting individuals to fill safety sensitive positions, and Risk Management has an agreement with the MVA to receive notification of transportation violations for each employee.
- As applicable, all Commercial Driver Licenses (CDL) requirements are followed.
- There is a process to determine driver fitness for duty based on an examination by a medical professional.
- Behind the wheel safety related driver performance evaluations are conducted at hire and at various times thereafter.
- When the tools of coaching, counseling or discipline are used to improve transit employee safety performance, these activities are documented and kept on file.

Training

Harford Transit LINK has programs, policies, procedures, protocols or infrastructure that address training.

- There is an overall training plan that guides all employee training and development activities.
- There are training curriculum/lesson plans, training schedules and materials to support all in-house training efforts.
- Trainers have appropriate background and qualifications to deliver training in assigned areas and receive periodic train-the-trainer instruction.

- Copies of all employee certificates and awards that document training or safety accomplishments are kept on file.
- Written records of all training classes are maintained.
- All on-the-job and behind-the-wheel training is documented with dates, times, information covered, and signatures of trainer and trainee.
- Individual employee files are maintained with documentation of all training each employee receives during his or her tenure with the organization.
- Drivers receive defensive driving training at hire and periodically throughout their career thereafter.
- Drivers receive training at-hire and periodically thereafter on hazardous driving conditions specific to the geography of the region.
- At hire and at least every 3 years thereafter, drivers receive training on passenger assistance and sensitivity techniques, and on lift equipment operation and wheelchair securement for each vehicle type in the fleet.
- At hire and periodically thereafter, drivers receive training on blood borne pathogen control procedures.
- Drivers receive a hands-on orientation on every vehicle prototype in the fleet that they may not be familiar with be called upon to operate.
- Drivers are trained at hire and periodically thereafter on appropriate pre-trip inspection techniques.
- Dispatchers and supervisory staff receive training on safety related procedures and protocols specific to their job function.
- Drivers, dispatchers, and supervisory staff receive periodic training on radio use or other communication protocols.
- Retraining based on poor safety-related performance is provided as needed for safety sensitive employees. This training is documented.

Facilities

Harford Transit LINK has programs, policies, procedures, protocols or infrastructure that address facility related safety.

- There is a facility risk reduction strategy to minimize possible theft, burglary and vandalism of transit assets.
- Periodic transit system facility safety audits are performed and documented.
- Building evacuation plans are posted in transit facilities and exits are clearly marked.
- Safety related facility maintenance is performed as required and documented.
- There is a program for ensuring facility safety for all employees that addresses workplace cleanliness and required safety standards and equipment.
- The organization has a fire prevention and reaction plan and conducts and documents periodic fire hazard inspections.
- Fire extinguishers are mounted at appropriate locations throughout facilities and properly monitored.

Fare Policy Statement

Harford Transit LINK sets fares in accordance with policies established by the Harford County policy and the approval of the Maryland Transit Administration.

Changes in Fares and Routes

Harford Transit LINK will provide the public a minimum 30 days notice before it increases fares or makes major changes, schedules, or routes. Harford Transit LINK will post notices of the change in all vehicles providing service along the route(s) affected by the change.

A “major” change in service is defined as a reduction in service that decreases the number of miles or hours by more than 30%, eliminating service to a particular geographic area (cutting the only route that serves an area), or eliminating service at particular times/days (evenings, weekends).

If the proposed change will affect a significant number of passengers, Harford Transit LINK will schedule a public meeting to allow public input according to our Title VI Policy Manual prior to making the change. To Include:

Public Outreach and Involvement

Public outreach and involvement applies to and affects Harford Transit LINK’s mission and work program as a whole, particularly agency efforts and responsibilities related to Harford Transit LINK’s service planning. The overall goal of Harford Transit LINK’s public outreach and involvement policy is to secure early and continuous public notification about and participation in, major actions and decisions by Harford Transit LINK. In seeking public comment and review, Harford Transit LINK makes a concerted effort to reach all segments of the population; including people from protected communities and organizations identified as representing the protected classes. Harford Transit LINK utilizes a broad range of public outreach information and involvement opportunities, including a process for written comments, public meetings after effective notice, settings for open discussion, information services and consideration of and response to public comments.

Elements of Harford Transit LINK’s Communications & Public Involvement Program

- **Website** – Harford Transit LINK maintains a website, (as part of Harford County, Maryland’s website) www.harfordtransitlink.org, which is updated as new information becomes available. The site includes information on the agency’s, Ride Guide, bus schedules, responsibilities, programs, publications, meeting dates, and news items, contact information; a search function, the Title VI Plan, complaint procedures and complaint form. We also developed a website place where you can email the Harford Transit LINK to help encourage people to participate in several ways such as: signing up to receive text messages and e-mail updates for attending meetings, requesting a speaker, or contacting the office for other information.
- **Publications** – Each year or as needed, the Harford Transit LINK issues publications, reports and maps as part of the agency’s work program and respond to and processes a number of data requests. The information is used by planning agencies and various departments throughout the county/region, and can be accessed by the public through the Harford Transit LINK’s website www.harfordtransitlink.org or by submitting specific requests to our office: 1311 Abingdon Road, Abingdon, MD 21009.
- **Press releases** – Press releases are occasionally sent to local and regional media outlets including daily and weekly newspapers, TV stations, and radio stations. Press releases may include the abbreviated Title VI Notice to the public and contact information for agency staff.
- **Opportunities for public comment** – Harford Transit LINK provides opportunities for public comment and continues to work to find new and innovative ways to solicit public comments and involve all segments of the population in Harford County, Maryland. Comments

are accepted by phone, fax, e-mail, U.S. mail, and in person at any of the meetings. See the section below entitled “Opportunities for Public Comment” for details.

- **Harford Transit LINK’s Staff is accessible** – Staff is accessible in person, on the phone or TTY, by mail, by fax, by e-mail, or by online comment forms. Contact information for the Harford Transit LINK’s staff is provided on the agency’s website.
- **Mailings** – Harford Transit LINK may use direct mail to keep the public informed of the agency’s programs, public comment periods, meetings and publications. See the next section for details.
- **Events** – Events such as workshops, open houses, and forums are held as deemed necessary.

Opportunities for Public Comments

Harford Transit LINK offers several different ways for people to comment on activities, programs and decisions made at the agency as follows:

- **Comments are accepted at any time** – Comments are accepted via an online comment form, or by phone, fax, e-mail, U.S. mail and in person at the office or during any community meeting or event. Contact information for staff is provided on the agency website and contact information (as required) is included in every publication produced by Harford Transit LINK.
- **Formal public comment periods for major activities** – Formal public comment and review periods are used to solicit comments on major planning and programming activities, for example, Harford Transit LINK’s Annual Transportation Plan (ATP) report, major changes to important Harford Transit LINK policies and major updates to the Transportation Development Plan. Generally, information is reviewed and released during a public hearing. The comment period is highlighted in the newspaper notification and on the home page of the website. Legal notices are distributed throughout the County. Comments can be made in person at any public meeting, using a comment form to be added on the agency’s website, by e-mail, by U.S. mail or fax. Harford Transit LINK responds to comments received when appropriate and forwards comments to other agencies for a response when appropriate. Comments and responses received throughout the comment period are reviewed and considered at this time, prior to action.
- **Public Hearings** – Harford Transit LINK may participate in public hearings during major updates to the County’s Transportation Plan or when undergoing the process for issuing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Please refer to Harford Transit LINK’s Public Participation Plan in the Title VI Manual for further information.

Lift Maintenance

All Harford Transit LINK buses are equipped with wheel chair lifts or ramps. Harford Transit LINK deploys a vehicle only if the lift or ramp is functioning. If a lift or ramp breaks down while a bus is in service, Harford Transit LINK will replace the bus as soon as possible with a vehicle with a functioning lift or ramp. If a passenger on the bus or along the route or scheduled for pick-up by paratransit service requires the use of a lift or ramp immediately, Harford Transit LINK personnel will take all reasonable necessary steps to assure that the passenger gets to his/her destination in a reasonable amount of time.

Passenger’s belongings

For the safety and security of all transit customers, passengers shall not obstruct aisles or interfere with entrance or exit of other passengers. All packages, bags, strollers, etc. must be stored or held in such a way that they do not present an obstruction to, or interfere with other passengers. If a passenger places his/her belongings on a seat, he/she must pay an additional general passenger fare for the use of the seat.

Policy on Children (under 46 inches in height)

Children under 46 inches in height may ride the bus for free if accompanied by a person paying full fare (general passenger rate). One child (under 46 inches in height) permitted per paying adult.

Requirement for Securing Wheelchair and Related Devices

Harford Transit LINK requires that all wheelchairs, scooters, and similar mobility devices be secured in the securement area of the vehicle. If a passenger refuses to allow his/her device to be secured, Harford Transit LINK personnel will offer the passenger the alternative of transferring to a seat. If the passenger refuses, Harford Transit LINK may deny service to the individual.

The only exception to this policy shall be situations where, the mobility device meets the regulatory definitions set for by the Americans with Disabilities Act and despite the best efforts of Harford Transit LINK personnel, the mobility device cannot be safely secured in the securement area. In these situations, Harford Transit LINK will offer the passenger the alternative of transferring to a seat, but will provide the service, whether the passenger accepts the alternative or not.

Service Animals

Harford Transit LINK permits service animals to accompany passengers with disabilities on all modes of transportation. A service animal is any animal individually trained to provide assistance to an individual with a disability according to federal regulations and/or guidance (including the latest ruling that a service animal is a dog). Harford Transit LINK personnel are not responsible for managing or handling service animals. The passenger is responsible for controlling and maintaining the service animal so that it does not jeopardize any other passenger, Harford Transit LINK personnel or interfere with the operation of the vehicle.

Passenger Assistance/Self Sufficiency/Personal Hygiene

A passenger whose physical hygiene is offensive to other passengers or jeopardizes the health of other passengers or the driver may be refused service by Harford Transit LINK.

Drivers may assist passengers to board and alight (exit) from the bus. Drivers are not responsible for providing hands-on personal care or assistance of any kind to passengers.

Passenger Behavior

Passengers may not bring the following items onto Harford Transit LINK vehicles and must follow the guidelines listed below. Any passenger that is hostile or disruptive and

does not adhere to the policies below may be asked to leave the bus and/or may be refused service:

- Weapons of any kind, including firearms.
- Explosives, acids, or other dangerous articles or substances.
- Bicycles.
- Animals other than service animals.
- Open food or beverage containers of any kind.
- No one may smoke, eat, drink or spit on or in Harford Transit LINK vehicles. Passengers are responsible for taking all litter with them when they leave Harford Transit LINK vehicles.
- Passengers must use headphones or earphones while playing radios or other sound-producing devices; these devices must be inaudible to other passengers and the driver.
- Passengers should not talk to the driver while the bus is in motion.
- Passengers may not threaten or harass any other passenger(s) or the driver.
- Passengers may not engage in any behavior that may result in the distraction of the driver.
- Passengers must be fully clothed. Harford Transit LINK may refuse service to passengers without shoes or appropriate attire.

Fare Structure

Regular Fares

Fares for fixed bus routes are as follows:

- \$1.00 for the General public (Three and Older).
- \$0.50 for a person 60 and over with a Medicare card or other identification indicating that he/she is 60 and over.
- \$0.50 for persons with disabilities who have a Harford Transit LINK half fare card or ADA certification.

Fares for paratransit service are as follows:

- \$2.00 for ADA/SSTAP paratransit services and other paratransit services.
- \$1.00 for persons 60 and over traveling to Harford County senior centers only.

Special Fare Provisions

1. **Transfers** apply to fixed routes only. A passenger may obtain a free transfer to connect from one fixed route to another, upon paying for the original fare. Transfers can only be used for up to two (2) hours or next transfer stop (whichever is less) on the day of issue.
2. **12 Ride Passes** 12 ride passes apply to fixed routes only. A passenger may obtain a 12 ride pass:
 - \$10 if the passenger is a member of the general public.
 - \$5 if the passenger is 60 and over as documented by a Medicare card or other identification.
 - \$5 if the passenger is disabled and presents a Harford Transit LINK half fare card.

Route Services

Scheduled Bus Stops

Harford Transit LINK will indicate the time and place for regularly scheduled bus stops on bus route schedules, available both in paper format and from Harford Transit LINK's website on the Internet. <http://www.harfordtransitlink.org>

Bus Announcement Procedures

- On fixed route systems, the entity shall announce stops as follows:
- Harford Transit LINK Bus Operators shall announce at least at transfer points with other fixed routes, other major intersections and destination points and intervals along a route sufficient to permit individuals with visual impairments or other disabilities to be oriented to their location.
- The Bus Operator shall announce any stop on request of an individual with a disability.
- Where vehicles or other conveyances for more than one route serve the same stop, the entity shall provide a means by which an individual with a visual impairment or other disability can identify the proper vehicle to enter or be identified to the vehicle operator as a person seeking a ride on a particular route.

Individuals with Disabilities

- Harford Transit LINK shall ensure that vehicle operators and other personnel will make use of accessibility-related equipment or features as required.
- All Representatives of Harford Transit LINK shall make available to individuals with disabilities adequate information concerning transportation services. This obligation includes making adequate communications available, through reasonable accessible formats and technology, to enable users to obtain information and schedule service.
- Harford Transit LINK's policy is not to prohibit an individual with a disability from traveling with a respirator or portable oxygen supply, consistent with applicable Department of Transportation rules on the transportation of hazardous materials (49 CFR subtitle B, chapter 1, subchapter C).

Flag Stops

Passengers using the fixed route service may get on or off a bus at a safe location, other than scheduled bus stops, if the location has been approved by Harford Transit LINK. These locations are referred to as "flag stops." A flag stop must be approved by the Administrator of Harford Transit LINK or his/her designee before a driver will be permitted to stop at a destination other than a scheduled bus stop. A passenger planning to use a flag stop is advised to call Harford Transit LINK, prior to his/her trip.

Paratransit Services

The following standards apply to paratransit service only; they do not apply to fixed route service.

Personal Care Attendants and Companions

Harford Transit LINK will provide service to one companion, including a friend or family member, who is accompanying a paratransit eligible individual on a trip. Fares for companions accompanying paratransit eligible individuals shall be the same as for eligible individuals they are accompanying. Harford Transit LINK will also provide service to a personal care attendant who is accompanying the paratransit eligible individual. A personal care attendant required to travel with the paratransit eligible individual to assure that the person is able to complete his/her trip shall not be charged for paratransit service if the personal care attendant is pre-registered with Harford Transit LINK. The passenger should register his/her personal care attendant with Harford Transit LINK at the time he/she applies for eligibility under one of Harford Transit LINK's paratransit programs.

No Show Policy

A passenger on one of Harford Transit LINK's paratransit services will be considered a "No-show" if he or she cancels a pick-up but fails to notify Harford Transit LINK at least one hour before his/her scheduled pick-up time. Harford Transit LINK will notify the passenger by phone or mail that he/she has been classified as a "no-show." If the passenger has three no-shows within a calendar month, Harford Transit LINK may suspend services for a month, unless the passenger or his/her representative can show that there are extenuating circumstances.

Pick-up Location(s)

Harford Transit LINK will pick-up passengers only at locations that are safe for the driver, the passenger(s) and the vehicle. Harford Transit LINK will determine if a location is safe for pick-up. In the event that the proposed pick-up location is not safe, Harford Transit LINK may request that the passenger arrange for physical modifications to the pick-up location (i.e., trimming of tree branches, etc) or arrange for an alternative pick-up location.

Origin-to-Destination - Curb-to-Curb Service

- **Who is eligible:** Origin-to-Destination (curb-to-curb) service is available to any Harford County resident sixty and over or under 60 with a disability or handicapping condition. The condition must result in the person being unable to utilize mass transportation facilities and services without special facilities or special planning as effectively as a person who is not so affected.
- **How customers become eligible:** Persons 60 and over become eligible for the service by calling Harford Transit LINK, providing some form of ID with their date of birth or a Medicare card and registering with Harford Transit LINK. A Harford Transit LINK driver may require a passenger to provide proof of age at the time of pick-up.

Persons under the age of 60 become eligible by submitting a Request for Certification of Paratransit Eligibility (ADA). If the person is not eligible for ADA

Paratransit services, Harford Transit LINK will use the information on the Certification to determine if the person qualifies for non ADA Origin-to-Destination (curb-to-curb) service. Harford Transit LINK personnel may request information in addition to that contained on the Certification forms, if necessary (see Appendices for copies of the forms).

- **Trip reservation requirements:** Harford Transit LINK accepts Origin-to-Destination (curb-to-curb) reservations up to 90 days in advance of the day of the trip. Harford Transit LINK accepts calls for reservations between the hours of 9:00 AM and 4:00 PM Monday through Friday. Reservations are made on a first come first served basis. When capacity is reached for a given day, no more reservations will be taken for that day. In this situation, Harford Transit LINK staff will offer a passenger an alternative date for his/her trip.
- **Passenger Pick-up time Window:** Passengers may be picked up within an hour before or after their pick-up time. Harford Transit LINK will seek to pick-up passengers as close to the scheduled pick-up time as possible.

When a driver arrives at the passenger's pick-up location, the passenger will have five minutes to get to the vehicle to board. If the passenger does not appear before the five minutes are up, the driver will contact the Harford Transit LINK dispatcher and ask for permission to leave. Final decisions about leaving the location will be made by a dispatcher and/or supervisors. The Bus Operator shall ensure that adequate time is provided to allow individuals with disabilities to complete boarding or disembarking from the vehicle.

Senior Center Support Services

- **Who is eligible and verification requirements:** Harford County residents sixty and over are eligible for senior center transportation. They become eligible for the service by calling Harford Transit LINK, providing their date of birth, and registering with Harford Transit LINK. A Harford Transit LINK driver may require a passenger to provide proof of age at the time of pick-up.
- **How seniors reserve trips:** Senior Center participants reserve trips by signing up at the senior center they are attending by 10:00 AM Monday - Friday the day before they wish to travel. In the event that Harford Transit LINK receives more senior center requests for trips than it has capacity, service will be provided on a first come, first served basis.
- **Boundaries of senior center pick-up areas:** Harford Transit LINK will establish pick-up areas for each senior center to assure that participants are able to get to and from the nearest senior center in a timely manner. Harford Transit LINK will review the pick-up areas on an annual basis and adjust them as necessary.

Americans with Disabilities Act

- **Who is eligible**
 - ✓ Any individual with a disability who is unable to use an accessible vehicle without the assistance of another individual (except the operator of a wheelchair lift or other boarding assistance device).

- ✓ An individual with a disability traveling on an otherwise accessible route but wants to use a stop from which boarding or disembarking from a Harford Transit LINK bus is not possible.
 - ✓ Any individual with a disability who has a specific condition that prevents him/her from traveling to or from a designated bus stop to board or get off a bus.
 - ✓ **Visitors:** An ADA eligible individual from another jurisdiction, including one in another state, shall be considered a visitor. A visitor may use Harford Transit LINK's ADA paratransit services, provided he/she submits either documentation that he/she has been previously certified as ADA eligible in the other jurisdiction or evidence that they qualify for ADA services. A visitor may use Harford Transit LINK's ADA paratransit services for any combination of 21 days in any 365-day period. The 21-day calculation will begin with the first date they use the service.
- **Service area:** The ADA paratransit service area extends $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile on either side of the fixed route bus services operated by Harford Transit LINK in Harford County. Trips requested by eligible persons that begin and end within this service area are considered eligible trips in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.
 - **Service hours:** The ADA paratransit service operates during the same hours as Harford Transit LINK's fixed route buses. Harford Transit LINK bus routes have different beginning and ending times. Most bus routes operate between 6:15 AM and 6:15 PM Monday - Friday. Determinations of eligible pick-up and drop-off time for an ADA paratransit trip will depend on the schedule of the bus route for which the paratransit trip is providing equivalent service.
 - **Advanced reservations:** Passengers eligible for ADA paratransit may make trip reservations up to 14 days in advance of a trip. Harford Transit LINK will accept trip reservations up to 4 PM the day before the eligible person wants to travel. The definition of "the day before" includes Saturdays and Sundays when the day of travel is Monday and holidays, if the day after a holiday is a regular Harford Transit LINK operating day.
 - **Scheduling Pick-ups Passenger Pick-up time Window:** Passengers may be picked up within an hour before or after their appointed time. Harford Transit LINK will seek to pick-up passengers as close to the scheduled pick-up time as possible.

When a driver arrives at the passenger's pick-up location, the passenger will have five minutes to get to the vehicle to board. The Bus Operator shall ensure that adequate time is provided to allow individuals with disabilities to complete boarding or disembarking from the vehicle. However, if the passenger does not appear before the five minutes are up, the driver will contact the Harford Transit LINK dispatcher and ask for permission to leave. Final decisions about leaving the location will be made by a dispatcher.

- **ADA Fares**

- ✓ Fares for ADA paratransit/demand response shall be twice the fare that is in effect for the general public on Harford Transit LINK's fixed routes.
 - ✓ Fares for companions accompanying paratransit eligible individuals shall be the same as for the paratransit eligible individuals they are accompanying.
 - ✓ A personal care attendant (previously registered with Harford Transit LINK) shall not be charged for paratransit service under any paratransit service operated by Harford Transit LINK.
- **Application Process**
 - ✓ **Application forms:** Applicants for ADA Paratransit services shall complete a Harford Transit LINK Request for Certification of Paratransit Eligibility under the Americans with Disabilities Act. Part A of the application is to be completed by the applicant or his/her representative. Part B shall be completed by a physician, health care professional familiar with the applicant's condition. Parts A and B completed and signed shall constitute a completed application. (See Part B of the Application for a detailed list of Health Care Professionals).
 - ✓ **Eligibility Determination:** The Administrator of Harford Transit LINK or his/her designee shall make a determination of eligibility within 21 days of receipt of the complete application. The Administrator shall inform the applicant in writing of the determination.
 - ✓ **Issuance of ADA Paratransit Card:** If an applicant has been determined to be eligible; he/she is issued an ADA Paratransit Card, and can schedule service in accordance with service guidelines. Harford Transit LINK will determine ADA paratransit eligibility within 21 days of submission by the applicant of a complete application package.
 - ✓ **Presumptive Eligibility** Applicants who have not received a determination within 21 days will be treated as eligible and provided service until and unless Harford Transit LINK determines that they are not eligible.
 - **Appeals Process** A person having a complaint alleging action by Harford Transit LINK prohibited by the Americans with Disabilities Act, including improper denial of eligibility for ADA paratransit service, may appeal Harford Transit LINK's action, in accordance with Harford County's Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Grievance Procedure (see Appendix 3).
 - **Other ADA Requirements:** Harford Transit LINK shall ensure that vehicle operators and other personnel will make use of accessibility-related equipment or features as required.

All Representatives of Harford Transit LINK shall make available to individuals with disabilities adequate information concerning transportation services. This obligation includes making adequate communications available through reasonable accessible formats and technology to enable users to obtain information and scheduled service.

Harford Transit LINK's policy is not to prohibit an individual with a disability from traveling with a respirator or portable oxygen supply, consistent with applicable

Department of Transportation rules on the transportation of hazardous materials (49 CFR subtitle B, chapter 1, subchapter C).

Appendix 1.1 Cover Letter, ADA, Disability, and Elderly Reduced Fare Packet

Date _____ / _____ / 20_____

Dear

Thank you for your inquiry about an ADA, disability or elderly reduced fare pass to be used to ride Harford Transit LINK route buses. Enclosed is an application form. You should complete Part A.

If you have an eligibility card or letter from one of the agencies listed below. Check the appropriate box and attach a copy of that card or letter to Part A and send both back to us. **(You do not need to complete Part B if you have proof of one of these listed below).**

- Medicare
 - SSI Disability Benefits
 - Social Security Disability Benefits
 - Age 60 or older (attach license or ID)
 - Veteran's Administration benefits at 50% or greater disability
 - Receives services through an agency funded by the Developmental Disabilities Administration
-

If you do not have an eligibility card or letter as required in Part A, you will need a health care professional who is familiar with your condition complete Part B. After he/she completes the form, return Part A and Part B (together as one package) to our office.

After we receive your completed application, we will determine if you are eligible for a reduced fare pass. If it is determined that you are eligible, we will mail the reduced fare pass to you.

Thank you for your interest in Harford Transit LINK.

Sincerely,

Gary Blazinsky, CCTM, CSSO
Administrator
Harford Transit LINK





Harford Transit LINK



Application for Reduced Fare (for fixed route service) and/or Demand & Response/ADA Paratransit Services

There are several types of public transportation available throughout the State of Maryland, depending on the county in which you reside. We are pleased to inform you that Harford County through the cooperation of County Executive Barry Glassman and the County Council offers citizens a Fixed Route System, Demand & Response and ADA Paratransit services within Harford County.

Fixed Route Service: Bus service has designated bus stops along specific routes on set schedules. All buses now have features to make riding easier for people with disabilities, including wheelchair lifts or ramps and some buses have kneeling features, low floors and voice announcements. For Fixed Route schedules and maps please see our website: <http://www.harfordtransitlink.org>

Demand & Response and ADA Paratransit Service: Is Origin-to-Destination (in accordance with Harford County's/Harford Transit LINK's Policy Manual) shared ride public transportation service for people whose disability and/or residential location prevents them from using Fixed Route Service. You must call in advance to make a reservation to travel. We also created a Riders Guide to help you understand how to ride the Harford Transit LINK system. You can access the Riders Guide at the following website: <http://www.harfordtransitlink.org>

If your disability or environmental barriers prevent you from using our Fixed Route Service you may be eligible for Demand & Response (Origin-to-Destination, Paratransit) Service some or all of the time. Your ability to ride Fixed Route buses will be evaluated through the use of this application, an in-person interview and in some cases a functional assessment. A determination will be made within 21 days of your in-person interview or a presumptive eligibility will be granted until a determination of eligibility is made. When you are contacted for your in-person interview, it is to your benefit to schedule as soon as possible. Your application will not be processed without this step.

IMPORTANT: Medical condition or eligibility for other disability programs does not necessarily qualify you to use the Demand & Response (Paratransit) Service (Origin-to-Destination). Not having access to the fixed route bus service is not a qualifier.

What is the American with Disabilities Act (ADA)?

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a civil rights law. The intent of the ADA is to remove barriers that have prevented people with disabilities from fully participating in life. Under the ADA, Fixed Route Service is to be the primary means of public transportation for everyone, including people with disabilities.

Travel Training: Harford Transit LINK offers free one-on-one and/or group training to teach people with disabilities and service providers how to ride our Fixed Route buses. For more information, please call to request travel trainer services at: 410-612-1620.



Harford Transit LINK



Application for Reduced Fare (for fixed route service) and/or Demand & Response/ADA Paratransit Services

To ensure your application is processed in a timely manner, all questions must be answered. **Part A and Part B must be submitted at the same time. Incomplete applications will be returned to the applicant and/or individual/agency completing the application.** All information is kept confidential and may be utilized for internal and/or operational purposes including contact with customer's treatment centers/employees and other contacts provided by the applicant/customer.

PART A: General information regarding the applicant. To be completed by applicant or an individual on behalf of the applicant. I hereby authorize the release of information requested on this application for use in evaluating my eligibility for services operated by Harford Transit LINK's Bus System of Harford County. I authorize LINK staff to contact the professional(s) who completed this form if clarification of information is needed, and I authorize the professional(s) to release all pertinent information to Harford LINK employees.

Current Rider **New Applicant**

Name: Last		First	
MI			
Street Address: (Apt. or Room No.)			
Name of Development or Apartment Complex:			
City:		State:	
Zip:			
Mailing Address if different:			
Home Phone:		Cell Phone:	Work
Phone:			
Email Address:			
Date of Birth:		Last four (4) Digits of SSN:	Weight
in lbs:			
Client ID# _____		Driver License or State ID	
# _____			
Other: _____		Passport # _____	Birth Certificate (copy) Provided? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes
<input type="checkbox"/> No			

Have you used fixed route bus service before?

Yes No

Sometimes

Where do you go? Medical Appointments Work Senior Center Shopping

Other(s)

List Other(s):

8. Which of these aids do you currently use when traveling? **Check all that apply.**

Portable Oxygen Prosthetic Leg Walker Manual Wheelchair

Alphabet/Picture Board Leg Brace Cane Rollator

Service Animal Crutches White Cane Power Scooter

Power Wheelchair - Power Wheelchair - Weight_____Lbs. Height_____ Width_____

Note: Manual and Power Scooters and Wheelchairs must be able to be safely accommodated with the vehicle's lift and must be secured for transportation. Maximum Weight may vary upon lifts' safety capacity when fully loaded.

9. Do you need assistance when you travel in the community?

Yes No

Sometimes

What type of assistance do they provide for you?

10. Can you climb three steps (11 to 15 inches) with a handrail, without assistance from another person?

Yes No Sometimes

(Print) Applicant's Name:

11. Does weather impact your ability to use the fixed route bus system?

Yes No

Sometimes

Explain?

12. Describe the environmental barriers around your home or apartment that may prevent you from getting to the bus stop (i.e.: steps, sidewalk, hills, grass, gravel, distance, weather, air quality, etc.).

13. Are you able to navigate to the nearest bus stop without assistance? Sometimes If no or sometimes, what prevents you?	Yes	No
14. Can you cross streets with very little traffic where there are no traffic controls or stops signs without assistance? Sometimes If no or sometimes, what prevents you?	Yes	No
15. Can you cross at traffic lights? No Sometimes If no or sometimes, what prevents you?		Yes
16. Can you cross at busy intersections with multiple lanes? Sometimes If no or sometimes, what prevents you?	Yes	No
17. Are you able to ask for and follow written or oral information? Sometimes If no or sometimes, what prevents you?	Yes	No
18. Are you able to recognize your destination or a landmark near your destination? Sometimes If no or sometimes, what prevents you?	Yes	No
19. Are you able to tell time? No		Yes
20. Are you able to count money? No		Yes
21. Are you able to read a bus schedule? No		Yes
22. Are you able to read and understand a bus schedule with an assistive device?	Yes	No

23 Have you participated in Travel Training?

Yes

No

24. Do you require Travel Training?

Yes

No

25. Any other information that you would like to explain:

(Print) Applicant's Name:

Applicant Certification and Signature

Application must be signed to be considered complete.

I understand the purpose of this application form is to determine if there are times when I cannot use Harford Transit LINK's Fixed Route buses and will require Demand & Response/ Paratransit services. I understand that the information on this application will be kept confidential and shared only with the appropriate County staff and other professionals involved in evaluating my eligibility. I certify that to the best of my knowledge, the information on this application is true and correct. I understand that providing false or misleading information could result in my eligibility status being terminated.

I give permission for Harford Transit LINK/County staff to contact the professional(s) who filled out information on this application or submitted supplemental verification of my condition.

Applicant Printed Name:

Date: ___/___/20___

Applicant Signature:

Person filling out this form if other than the Applicant (Check One)

I certify that the information provided in this application is true and correct based upon my professional role and the information given to me by the applicant.

I certify that the information provided in this application is true and correct based upon my own knowledge of the applicant's health condition or disability or I have legal authority to complete this application.

Print Name:

Signature:

Relationship to Applicant:

Home Phone:

()
()

Cell Phone:

()

Work Phone:

(

Street Address:

Zip:

City:

State:

Agency Name:

Agency Address:

) -

Phone:

(

Parts A and Part B must be submitted together.

If only one section is received, the application will be returned to applicant.

Mail To: Harford Transit LINK
ADA and/or Reduced Fare Services

Or Fax to: 410-612-1645
Or scan and email to:

hcts@harfordcountymd.gov

1311 Abingdon Rd
Abingdon, MD 21009

Part B

Dear Health Care Professional,

If you do not have Part A from the applicant, you must return Part B to the applicant. Parts A and B must be submitted together.

In order to complete this application on behalf of the applicant, you must be a certified or licensed Health Care professional. (See Chart below for details of Health Professionals)

The applicant is asking you to review the information on this application and to complete and sign Part B of this form certifying that the applicant has a disability that prevents them from using the fixed route bus service. This information will be used to determine if the applicant qualifies for Demand & Response (Paratransit) service Origin-to-Destination (in accordance with Harford County's/Harford Transit LINK's Policy Manual) or is able to use the fixed route service for some or all travel.

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) if a person has the functional and cognitive ability to use Harford Transit LINK's Fixed Route system the applicant is not eligible for paratransit services. Disability alone, distance to and from the bus stop, or the availability of Fixed Route bus service, is not by itself a qualifier for paratransit services (i.e.: Demand & Response, Origin-to-Destination services).

All of Harford Transit LINK's (Fixed Route and Demand & Response) vehicles are equipped with wheel chair lifts or ramps for individuals utilizing wheel chairs or by individuals unable to use the steps. Some buses can kneel or may be lower to the ground. In some cases taxi's may be utilized. Harford Transit LINK also offers **Travel Training** to assist persons with disabilities to use the fixed route bus service.

If you have any questions about completing Part B please call 410-612-1620

Minimum State Licensed or Certified Health Professionals	
Certified Nurse Practitioner Licensed Clinical Psychologist Optometrist (visual disabilities only) Physician	Physician Assistant Podiatrist (foot and ankle disability only) Psychiatrist (psychiatric disability only) Registered Nurse

(Print) Applicant's Name:

Part B

Part A must be attached.

A Licensed/Certified health Care Professional with knowledge of the applicant's functional abilities must complete this form.

Required Licensed/Certified Health Care Professional Information:

Name:

Professional Title:

Professional Specialization:

Professional License Number:

Clinic or Agency:

Address:
Zip:

City:

State:

Phone:
() -

Fax:
() -

Email:

Please include all applicable information in order to avoid delays in processing the applicant's application.

General Medical or Physical Disability Information

Applicant has been a patient of mine since: _____/_____/_____

Date of Applicant's last evaluation: _____/_____/_____

Indicate the nature of the applicant's condition or disability. This list is not inclusive. Check all that apply.

Currently receiving dialysis

Undergoing Cancer Treatment Expected Duration_____

Arthritis Type and area(s) affected:_____

Amputation Extremity_____ Prosthesis Yes
 No

Neurological Cognitive Condition Profound Mild Moderate Severe

Pulmonary Disease Oxygen sage_____

Hearing Impairment Degree of hearing loss:

<input type="checkbox"/> Diabetes	<input type="checkbox"/> Mental Illness
<input type="checkbox"/> End Stage Renal Disease	<input type="checkbox"/> Traumatic Brain Injury
<input type="checkbox"/> Neuromuscular Condition	<input type="checkbox"/> Legally Blind
<input type="checkbox"/> Cardiac Disease	<input type="checkbox"/> Severely Visually Impaired
<input type="checkbox"/> Alzheimer's	<input type="checkbox"/> Dementia
<input type="checkbox"/> Autism	Other :

(Print) Applicant's Name: _____

Section A - Seizure Disorder

Does the applicant experience Seizure's? If not, proceed to Section B - Cognitive Disorder

Does Applicant have a Seizure Disorder? Yes No (If Yes) Type _____

How often? _____ Recovery Time_____

Are seizures preceded by an aura? Yes No Is applicant taking seizure medication? Yes
 No

Are seizures currently controlled? Yes No When was the applicant's last seizure? ___/___/___

Is the applicant able to function safely and effectively in the community?
Yes No

Is the condition temporary? Yes No Expected End Date: ____/____/____

What is the expected duration? ____ Year(s) ____ Month(s)

Permanent

Section B - Cognitive Disorder

Does the applicant have a Cognitive Disorder? If not, proceed to Section C - Behavior Health.

What is the formal diagnosis of the applicant's condition?

Does the applicant have specific behavioral problems?

Yes No Describe:

Is the applicant able to travel alone?

Yes No

Does the applicant have the ability to follow directions? (check one)

Yes No

One Step Direction

Two Step Directions

Three Step Directions

None

Would the applicant know what to do if they became lost out in the community? Yes

No

Would the applicant be able to recognize and avoid dangers they might encounter when traveling in the community?

Yes No

Does the applicant have the ability to safely cross streets?

Yes No

Please check all that apply to safely cross streets at intersections. Provide additional information.

Problem Solving

Short Term Memory

Attention

Processing

Foresight/Planning

Safety Awareness and Judgment

Additional Information:

(Print) Applicant's Name:

Section C - Behavioral Health

Does the applicant have a Behavioral Disorder? If not, proceed to Section D - Visual Disability

What is the formal diagnosis of the applicant's condition?

What is the prognosis for this condition for independent function?

Has the applicant been prescribed medications for their condition?

Yes No

If yes, does this application attest the applicant can function safely in the community?

Yes No

Explain if necessary:

Has the applicant recently had a decline in function due to an adjustment in medication?

Yes No

Does the applicant experience auditory or visual hallucinations?

Yes No

How do the hallucinations impair the applicant's ability to function in the community?

Does the applicant experience anxiety or panic attacks in closed or crowded places?

Yes No

Explain:

Are there life skills that the applicant lacks that would prevent them from safely

Yes No

using county bus service? If yes, explain:

Section D - Visual Disability

Does the applicant have a Visual Disability? If not, proceed to CONCLUSION.

What is the formal diagnosis of the applicant's condition?

Best corrected vision

What is the prognosis? Is the condition stable, degenerative or otherwise changing?

Visual Disability (continued):

(Print) Applicant's Name:

Describe applicant's ability to safely and independently maneuver in the community.

Only on their property or familiar places

Quiet streets with very little traffic

To nearby places in the same block

Cross busy intersections/multiple lanes

With auditory cross signals only

At traffic lights

Other:

If the applicant is partially sighted, are they able to see steps and curves?

Yes No

Explain:

Is vision affected by different lighting conditions?

Yes No If yes, please check all that apply.

Bright sunlight

Applicant will benefit w/large print schedules

Nighttime

Other:

Dimly lit or shaded places

CONCLUSION

Is the applicant's ability to travel outside alone affected by other conditions, such as environmental noise and ability to distinguish traffic flow patterns? Explain:

Yes No

With training could the applicant independently travel and use the county bus service?

Yes No

If no, explain:

How far can the applicant properly operate a wheelchair and/or ambulate with or without a mobility aid without lengthy rest breaks?

No independent functional mobility Greater than ½ mile Greater than ¼ mile

Do their own shopping (walk around Mall) Applicant can walk approximately _____ City Blocks

How long can applicant wait at a bus stop **with** a bench and shelter? _____ Hour(s)
_____ Min(s)

How long can applicant wait at a bus stop **without** a bench and shelter? _____ Hour(s)
_____ Min(s)

Provide other vital information that will help the Agency make an appropriate eligibility determination.

Mail To: Harford Transit LINK
ADA and/or Reduced Fare Services
1311 Abingdon Rd
Abingdon, MD 21009

Or FAX To: 410-612-1645

Or Scan and email to: hcts@harfordcountymd.gov

END OF APPLICATION